

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 2023

Anyone Can Get It, But Young People Are at Higher Risk for STI/STDs

April 9 - 15, 2023 is STI Awareness Week – Are you at risk?

Harris County – April 9 - 15, 2023 is Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Awareness Week and Harris County Public Health (HCPH) joins forces with agencies across the country to highlight this public health concern, especially among young people. In a Texas Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) (also known as STI) Surveillance report, Harris County was ranked as the county with the highest STI case count in 2018 for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and total Syphilis. HCPH aims to reduce the STI-related stigma, fear, and discrimination; and ensure people have the tools and knowledge for prevention, testing, and treatment.

STIs such as chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis are serious public health concerns which have exacerbated since the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary data from CDC suggest that STIs decreased in the early months of the pandemic in 2020 but resurged by the end of the year. While STIs affect individuals of all ages, they take a heavy toll on young people. People of color are primarily the most vulnerable groups to newly diagnosed HIV cases.

Research shows that people may not believe they are at risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), even if they're engaging in risky behavior. As a result, they don't take steps to keep themselves healthy.

The good news is that STIs ARE preventable. Avoid giving or getting an STI:

- Practice abstinence – know your status and get tested if you are sexually active
- Use condoms correctly
- Have fewer partners
- Get vaccinated - The HPV vaccine is safe, effective, and can help you avoid health problems like genital warts and some cancers.

Are you at risk? Get Tested!

Many STIs don't have symptoms, but they can still cause health problems. The only way to know for sure if you have an STI is to get tested. If you test positive, don't be discouraged! Many STIs are curable, and all are treatable. If either you or your partner are infected with an STI that can be cured, both of you need to start treatment immediately to avoid getting re-infected.

- Talk with your health care provider
- Search for CDC recommended tests
- Find a location to get tested for STIs

HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.

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Harris County Public Health (HCPH) provides a variety of low-cost, clinical, and preventive health services to meet your essential healthcare needs. Contact:

Humble Clinic – Tel. 832-927-7350
Southeast Clinic – Tel. 832-927-7350
Antoine Prevention Clinic - Tel. 832-927-7350

Additionally, HCPH includes Testing 123 in its [HIV/STD Prevention Program](#), an innovative mobile outreach service that empowers clients to take control of their HIV testing process. With the convenience of testing on their own terms, at their preferred location, the program effectively reduces stigma and removes barriers to HIV testing.

Text 281-962-8378 to set up an HIV testing appointment.

For additional information visit hcphtx.org or cdc.gov.

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